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# FOOD PREVIEW

A summary of the food outlook especially designed to give maximum advance information to food editors to help them plan food features.

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U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Agricultural Marketing Service

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- MEAT: Meat output this year may fall a little below 1957, as gain in pork may not fully offset decline in beef. Meat consumption per person now forecast at 154 pounds--down 5 pounds from 1957. Beef consumption will be about 4 pounds smaller but include liberal quantities of upper grades. Veal and lamb consumption will also be down but pork will show a small increase, with most of gain toward year's end.
- Beef: Cattle slaughter expected to be a little less than 1957 as cut-back in slaughter of cows and heifers beginning late last year is expected to continue. Fed cattle marketings this year may be about as large as in 1957, and this spring may exceed a year earlier.
- Pork: Until fall, hog slaughter will not average much different from 1957. But it may be slightly higher in late winter and early spring. Slaughter next fall will be greater than last, due to producers' planned 6 percent increase in spring farrowings.
- Lamb: This year's per capita consumption of lamb and mutton is expected to be a little below last year--perhaps just under the 4 to 5 pound range of the past 6 years. On January 1 number of sheep and lambs on feed was 8 percent below a year earlier. While total numbers were up 2 percent, supplies of lamb and mutton may remain below last year throughout much of 1958.
- POULTRY:
- Chickens: Broiler chick replacements have been running about 10 percent above last year. Meanwhile, future broiler marketings are expected to return to a more normal relationship to placements. Consumption of all chicken meat per person this year is expected to average about 26 pounds, as against 25.3 pounds last year.
- Turkeys: This year's supply of turkeys is expected to be about the same as in 1957, since farmers January 1 intentions were for a crop equaling last year's record-breaking output of 80.6 million birds. This crop--plus record-large storage supplies--would maintain consumption about equal to the 1957 record of 5.8 pounds per person. February 1 storage supplies stood at 180 million pounds--6 percent above a year earlier but 37 percent greater than the 1953-57 average.
- EGGS: Egg production is rising to a seasonal March-April peak but it will be smaller than spring of 1957 because laying flock will likely continue about 4 or 5 percent lower than year before.
- DAIRY: Milk output per cow February 1 was 5 percent above previous high a year earlier. Production will probably run 1 to 1-1/2 billion pounds above 1957 record and is expected to continue to exceed commercial use. Total supply of dairy products for consumption this year will run greater than in last two years and be largest of record except for 1955.

## FRUIT:

Deciduous: On February 1 stocks of apples were much larger than a year ago, but pears were about the same. Fewer fresh strawberries will be available than last winter and spring.

Citrus: Supplies of fresh oranges and grapefruit between now and fall will be much smaller than in same part of 1956-57. Smaller supplies of fresh oranges next summer are indicated by unfavorable California Valencia prospects. Less grapefruit will be available this spring than last, due partly to freeze damage, and somewhat heavier early-season movement into consumption.

Dried: Supplies of dried prunes during remainder of 1957-58 marketing year are expected to equal or exceed supplies during same period last year, while raisin supplies will continue much below year earlier due to last year's smaller pack. Total per capita civilian consumption of all dried fruits is expected to average around 3.5 pounds, close to recent years' levels.

Canned: About as much canned fruit will be available this spring as a year earlier. Canned citrus juices expected to be in greater supply than in 1957. Consumption of canned fruit last year was about 22.6 pounds per person, a pound higher than in 1956.

Frozen: A little more frozen fruit and berries will be available this spring than last. But supplies of frozen concentrated orange juice will be smaller.

Tree Nuts: The 1957 walnut and pecan crops were below normal and some shortages have appeared. The 1957 almond crop was also small but addition of a large carryover from the record 1956 crop resulted in a total supply which is ample to meet normal requirements. A record filbert crop was produced in 1957 and supplies are abundant.

VEGETABLES: Total supplies of fresh vegetables are much below a year ago due to reduced production and smaller January 1 storage stocks of cabbage and onions. A sharp cut in production is mostly result of weather damage to Florida crops. Smaller harvests than last winter are in prospect for snap beans, cauliflower, sweet corn, green peppers and tomatoes. Much more moderate reductions are likely for carrots and celery. For cabbage lettuce and spinach output for the next few months is indicated about as large as last year.

Canned: Total supplies available for distribution into mid-1958 will run about same as last year. All Major items appear plentiful, with canned snap beans, sweet corn, and green peas in near-record supply. Demand for some processed vegetables strengthened this winter due to lighter supplies of some fresh items.

Frozen: Consumption per person increased again in 1957 to a new record. Indications are that 1957 pack was much below record 1,523 million pounds frozen in 1956 but total supplies were up a little due to larger old-pack carryover.

Potatoes: Supplies into mid-1958 promise to be somewhat below first half of 1957's burdensome level. Stocks of old-crop potatoes February 1 stood at 67 million hundredweight--12 million hundredweight below a year earlier. Winter production is down close to 2 million hundredweight and acreage intentions point to somewhat smaller potato crops this spring.

# **The Plentiful Foods Program**

The U. S. Department of Agriculture, through its Plentiful Foods Program, will support industry campaigns on the following commodities, at the following times:

DRIED PRUNES  
CEREAL AND MILK  
JUNE DAIRY MONTH

March 1 to 31, 1958  
April 1 to 30, 1958  
June 1 to 30, 1958